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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Sixteenth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 311th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 13 January 1997, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. KHAN

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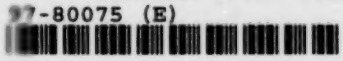

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 21 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (CEDAW/C/1997/3 and Add.1 to 4, CEDAW/C/1997/WG.II/WP.I)

WAYS AND MEANS OF EXPEDITING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (CEDAW/C/1997/4, CEDAW/C/1997/5, CEDAW/C/1997/WG.I/WP.I)

1. The CHAIRPERSON reviewed the membership of Working Group I, dealing with ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee, and Working Group II, which dealt with the implementation of article 21 of the Convention. Their mandates were contained in rule 50 of the rules of procedure. The practice of the Committee had been to keep the membership of those groups flexible; members were free to attend meetings of either group. Both Working Groups were scheduled to meet at the same time, with interpretation services alternating. Interpretation would be made available to both groups as often as possible.

2. It had also been the practice of the Committee to designate members as focal points to report briefly on the activities of other human rights bodies and specialized agencies during the course of the session.

3. Ms. GONZÁLEZ MARTÍNEZ inquired when the International Law Commission would take up the subject of reservations to conventions.

4. Ms. CONNOR (Division for the Advancement of Women) said that a compilation of work done on that subject within and outside the United Nations system was available.

5. Ms. JAVATE DE DIOS (Rapporteur) suggested that a copy of the reservations made by each State party would be very useful to members.

6. Ms. ABAKA said that a listing of the commitments made by States parties at the Beijing Conference to implement the Platform for Action could also be useful in the Committee's review of compliance by States parties.

7. Ms. SCHÖPP-SCHILLING said that the information on commitments made in Beijing could be included in the analysis of State party reports prepared by the Secretariat. She agreed that a compendium of reservations, along with an update of general comments issued by all human rights treaty bodies, would be very useful.

8. Ms. SHALEV noted that the commitments made in Beijing were not binding treaty obligations; therefore, the Committee must approach that subject with care.

9. Ms. BUSTELO GARCÍA DEL REAL said that the latest report from the Special Rapporteur on violence against women would be very welcome. With regard to the initial report of Morocco, it appeared to her that the State party had not

supplied the appendices containing statistical information required to accompany an initial report.

10. Ms. KINTU (Secretary of the Committee) said that the delegation from Morocco would provide updated statistical information when presenting the oral report.

11. Ms. CARTWRIGHT said that the Committee might wish to review the amount and nature of background documentation and analysis on State party reports that it requested from the Secretariat. For future sessions, information regarding reservations to the Convention could be included.

12. Ms. CORTI said that information from Slovenia had been received as late as 7 January 1997, which would not allow enough time for the Committee to prepare for its consideration. The Committee must set and enforce firm deadlines for submission of material from States parties.

13. Ms. TIMOTHY (Deputy Director, Division for the Advancement of Women) said that the main report of Slovenia had been received on 26 September 1996; the information received on 7 January 1997 was supplementary. The Secretariat had made it clear to the State party that the information had been received too late for consideration at the current session.

14. Ms. SCHÖPP-SCHILLING said that the issue of deadlines for reports from States parties would be considered in Working Group I. Although in fairness, all States parties should receive the same treatment, the Committee should welcome the opportunity to receive the latest information. Also, Member States experienced varying degrees of difficulty in gathering the required information. Incidentally, the Human Rights Committee had decided to accept comprehensive oral reports from Member States in addition to written reports. The reporting backlog should also be borne in mind.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.